A LOVE LETTER TO FALL OUT BOY AND CHICAGO HARDCORE

you wouldn't

know a good thing

if it came up

and

But there's a light on in Chicago...
... and I know I should be home.

The Patron Saint of Liars and Fakes

Sell out boy

and the Weirdly Early History of FOB's Status as a Sell Out Artist

by L Sparrow
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In January of 2004, PunkNews.org posted an article about Fall Out Boy's now-infamous van crash. As a news article is supposed to be, it was brief, informative and objective, simply relaying that the Chicago-based pop-punk band, Fall Out Boy, had experienced a car crash and damaged equipment, but all four members were fine.

The article is expectedly short and bland, but the comments from January and February of 2004 were unexpectedly vitriolic.

"What a bunch of primadonna assholes."

"Van accidents are the 'in' thing, I guess."

"These guys are destined to fail." (1)

What had Fall Out Boy done to receive this kind of hate? The explanation is not immediately apparent, but digging into the band's history reveals that they had committed two unforgivable sins in the scene:
They made soft-core music while still playing to hardcore crowds
They had female fans.

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No single member of Fall Out Boy had any sort of history making pop music, and while it's taken as a basic fact of the band now, the idea of Pete Wentz becoming a pop star must have been near impossible to imagine for the Chicago hardcore scene in the late 90s and early 00s. Wentz was a founding member(2) of hardcore bands xFIRSTBORNx, Arma Angelus, as well as a former member of hardcore punk band Racetraitor. He quoted Malcolm X in his high school yearbook, got stick and poke tattoos of Xs for the hardcore, straight-edge lifestyle, and even as a teenager wrote scathing political lyrics. (3) Not as a result of peer pressure, either - Tim Miller, also of xFIRSTBORNx and Arma Angelus, noted in a recent interview that "[the political stuff] was more of Pete" and that Pete was "the lifeblood of both bands" in terms of ideology and lyricism both.(4)

A 1999 article about The Grave End of the Shovel EP release notes that "Racetraitor was one of the most significant hardcore bands from the last few years as they injected politics, debate, and thought into an ideologically stagnant hardcore scene. Arma Angelus continues along these lines."(5) Racetraitor at the time famously boasted both Pete Wentz and Andy Hurley as members, while Joe Trohman and Patrick Stump also played with Arma Angelus in the band's later years. And it's noteworthy that not only were these bands politically incendiary, they were rock far harder on the Mohs scale than what usually leaks into the mainstream music scene. Pete Wentz' lead vocals in Arma Angelus were exclusively dirty - that is to say, all screaming, no singing. The genre of pop punk, gaining heavy traction across the country in SoCal with bands like Green Day and Blink-182, were far from apolitical or bubblegum, but equally far from the mosh pits and screamo that defined the hardcore scene in Chicago.

How, then, did three heavy-metalheads and one everyman (who also picked up for ska bands) end up in Fall Out Boy, the genre-defying turned genre-defining emo band of the 00s?

According to the members themselves, mostly for fun.

"I wanted to do something easy and escapist," Pete said in the oral history of Take This To Your Grave. "We wanted to do pop-punk because it would be fun and hilarious. It was definitely on a lark. We weren't good. If it was an attempt at selling out, it was a very poor attempt."

It's a similar story across the scene. Cobra Starship's Gabe Saporta frequently describes similar inspiration for moving from the moodiness of Midtown to the unserious club-pop of his next project. The music that many of these musicians were drawn to make at first become too heavy, and many decided to move towards levity rather than continue with existing projects.

No one really expected Fall Out Boy to skyrocket to success - least of all Fall Out Boy themselves. But reader, as you hold a Fall Out Boy-themed fanzine in your hand over two decades later, it's obvious that they did. From the founding of the band (late 2001-early 2002) to January of 2004 (only two years later), Fall Out Boy had been signed to Island Def Jam Music Group and were filming music videos with real budgets, albeit small ones.

The concept of selling out is as old as the confluence of art and capitalism, and to some, it's a punishable offense. While Fall Out Boy was never meant to be like the earlier projects its members worked on, their musical pasts were not easily forgotten. There are arguments to be made about sour grapes and other members of the scene being displeased to not be on the same elevator to the top as these former members of Arma Angelus, yet Rise Against did not face similar levels of scrutiny. Fall Out Boy lyrics were more personal and more esoteric, its vocals were more radio friendly, and the music was far less likely to open up a mosh pit.

And then, there was another major aspect in Fall Out Boy's status as mall-pop sellouts: sexism.

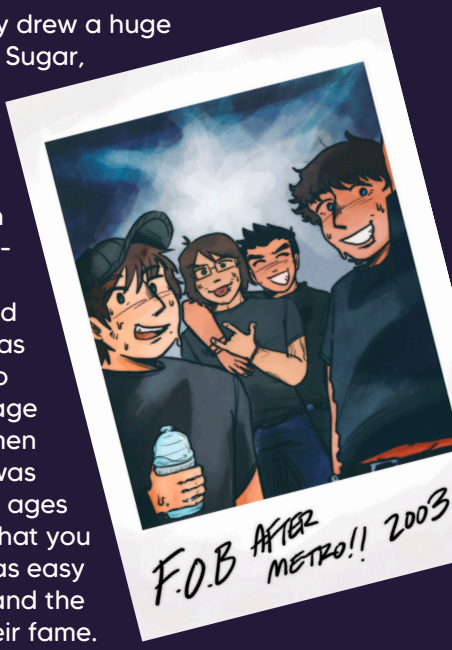
The Chicago hardcore scene that I keep referring to was politically very far left. Racetraitor members would address audience members as crackers during concerts, rage against white supremacy was expected,

veganism and straight edge culture prevailed, and ecological justice was a demand tattooed on Wentz' back.

Liberty and justice for all had a distinctly masculine bent, though.

There were no women in Arma Angelus. There were no women in Racetraitor prior to its 2016 reformation. The hardline subculture(6), a major player in the Chicago hardcore scene at the time, was actively anti-choice. By and large, if women were mentioned at all in the scene, it was in the form of lyrics belittling ex-girlfriends. While otherwise progressive, this was a culture that was hostile to women.

Unlike the hardcore shows, Fall Out Boy drew a huge crowd of women and girls. Indeed, by the time Sugar, We're Going Down brought an onslaught of fame for the band, they were famously a "girl band," as in no longer cool for boys to like because so many girls were in the audience. It did not matter that Fall Out Boy had "Boy" in the name, had only men as members, and wrote no lyrics directly referring to women outside of the context of past and present lovers. It had become a girly band, and was therefore seen as worthy of mockery. When Pete Wentz began to grace the covers of magazines aimed at teenage girls, the problem was exacerbated. More women listened to Fall Out Boy, more men decided it was embarrassing for them to like. Even in the dark ages of the mid-00s, it wasn't cool to say out loud that you just hate women, the argument of "sell out" was easy to make. "Sell Out Boy" rolled off the tongue, and the infamy of Fall Out Boy grew in tandem with their fame.



Fall Out Boy, when confronted with this deluge of hatred, did the only thing they could do: they embraced it. A t-shirt in the Folie a Deux pre-order bundle had written on the top "Fall Out Boy hasn't been good since:" and then empty check boxes next to all of their previous albums, so that a fan could indulge in irony with the band and mark a time when the band lost their sparkle. Wentz, already mocked for appealing to girls as a sex symbol, asked if he could be shirtless for the band's Rolling Stone cover, saying that he did so because he thought it would piss people off. (7) The video for "I Don't Care" opens with other musicians mocking Fall Out Boy as soft, unworthy of being called rock stars. By 2008, it was clear that Fall Out Boy was done interacting with these accusations except to make fun of them. But, to be fair, they reacted just the same as they did all the way back in winter of 2004, after surviving their van crash.

Straight from the archives of falloutboyrock.com: "Please send us a van and kisses: Hell c/o fall out boy - and if you don't like us we hope you catch cancer."

#©@

Wish You
Were Here!

DIY T-SHIRTS & EARLY FALL OUT BOY

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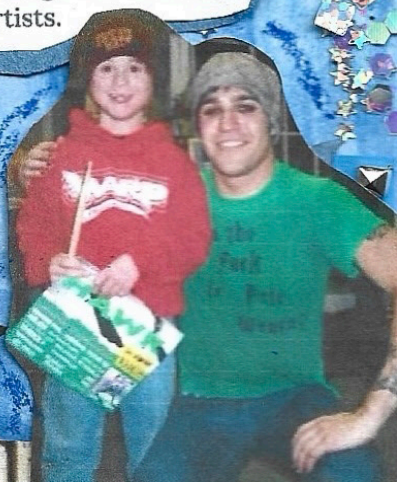
on instagram :P

Chicago has always been a breeding ground for musicians, especially hardcore in the 80s. Hardcore seemed to have gotten smaller from the 80s to the 90s, when in reality it was divided into more specific subcultures. In places such as New York, LA, the Bay Area, there was a lot of hostility between punks, metalheads, and goths, with clear divisions between groups. But Chicago was a different story; it was a place where people would just show up to shows, regardless of genre, just to have a good time and to support local artists.

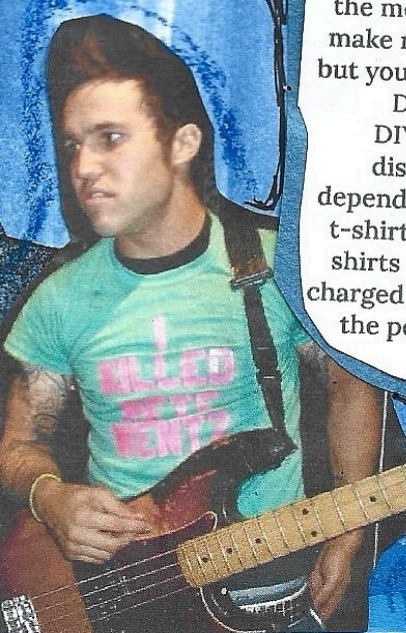


When subcultures started to get more niche, the DIY element of the scene became a more prominent factor in shows. DIY labels like Wax Trax, Bloodshot, Touch and Go, and Drag City, were all founded in Chicago, all with great lineups and legacies. The city supported artists who were unable to find their place on bigger labels. Bands and artists who were too unconventional for mainstream consumption could flourish and thrive in Chicago, a place that was so full of different subcultures that really valued the ethics of DIY. The DIY ethic blurred the line between artist and audience; DIY took a team effort that united people. That's what hardcore remains for a lot of people, including myself. It never quite feels like "going to a show" as much as it feels like "hanging out with my friends who get on stage sometimes," because everyone is working together to keep the scene alive.

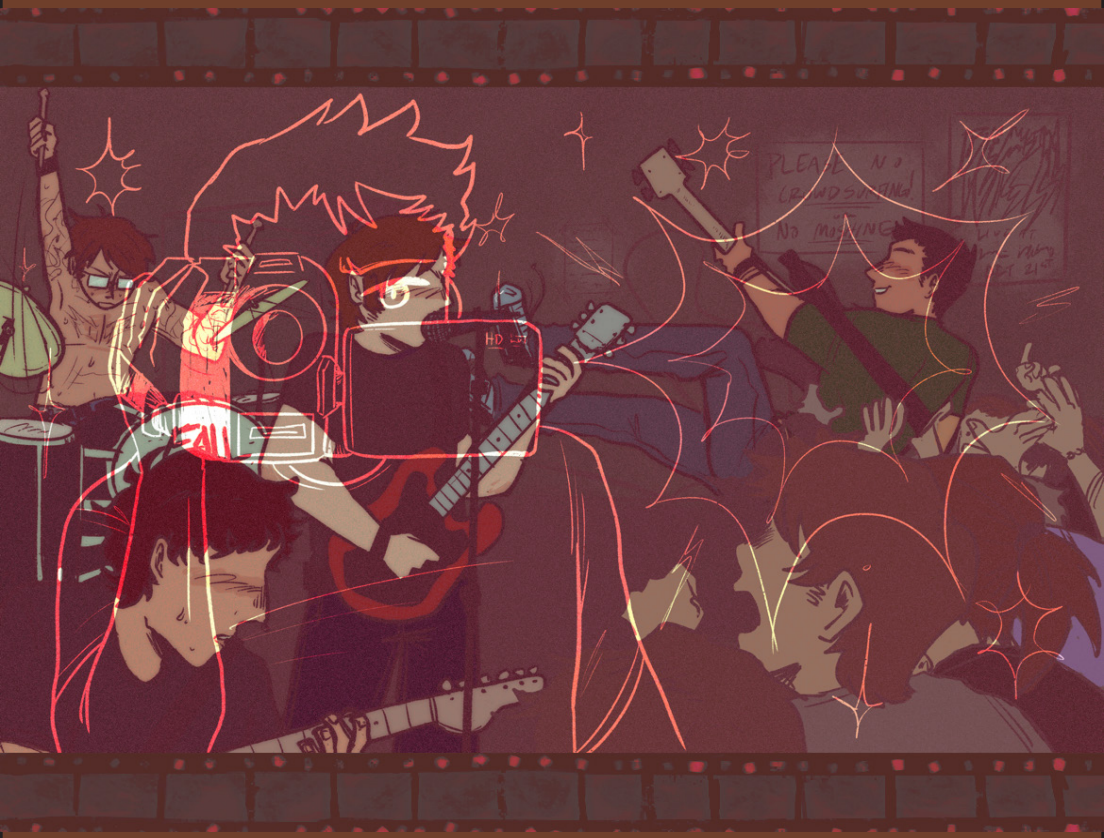
Fall Out Boy can be traced back to these DIY roots pretty easily. Pete Wentz had always been in bands since high school, deeming himself straightedge at 15, but the bands were all metal-adjacent and hardcore bands. At the same time, Andy Hurley was in multiple bands while attending the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Being a part of bands was simply a part of their lives, it's not like they joined a band and it accidentally got famous. Fall Out Boy was meant to happen at some point even if it wasn't at *this* point.

Andy joined the grindcore/metalcore band Racetraitor as their drummer in 1997. That same year, Pete was a part of a vegan straightedge metalcore band called Extinction. This is when the two got to know each other, and this is where Fall Out Boy can really be traced back to. Pete even filled in for bass for Andy's band sometimes, floating in and out of Racetraitor without being a solid, long term member. Then, in the year 2000, Pete Wentz formed a new band called Novena, where Andy played bass despite his little experience, and Pete played lead vocalist. The lineup quickly changed and Novena became something more familiar: Arma Angelus. There's videos of the original lineup playing their first show at the Fireside Bowl.

Fall Out Boy as we know them now might not be your definition of hardcore, but DIY is an ethic, an ethic you carry with yourself for the rest of your life once you start embodying it. DIY means anti-consumerism. DIY means to be self sufficient. DIY means improvisation. DIY means independence. And what's the most DIY thing you can do? Music! Anybody can make music. That doesn't mean it's going to be good, but you can do it. And everything adjacent to it can be DIYed too, from manufacturing albums to DIY-touring, to zines, to posters, to shirts to distribute at shows, all for little to no charge depending on the service. Let me put an emphasis on t-shirts. Even now, I don't usually see any DIY band shirts go for more than 10 dollars. They could have charged more, and kids would pay more, but that's not the point of DIY. The point is to create and share something special to grow the scene.



That's exactly what Fall Out Boy embodies. Fall Out Boy has always encouraged fans to do their part to save the scene, and that's why whenever I see posts about Pete's old DIY shirts, they're so sentimental to me, as corny as that sounds. It's a trace of the unified ethic so prominent in the 90s Chicago DIY hardcore scene that the band was initially shaped by. Yes, the shirts are silly and stupid, but they're also a reminder of Fall Out Boy's roots. It shows a sense of self-effacing humor, a key element of indie bands like Minutemen, Black Flag, The Pixies, etc. It's a reminder that no matter how many copies are being sold, or how many arenas are being sold out, Fall Out Boy is still your favorite hardcore band at heart.



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Fall Out Boy's First Full-Length LP 'Take This To Your Grave' Created a Sonic Boom Over a Generation

by Kayla Moreno
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Once upon a time, Fall Out Boy was an underground hidden gem that played sweaty hole-in-the-wall venues like The Metro in Chicago or smaller house shows around their suburban neighborhoods. They had always been unassuming; Patrick Stump began as the band's shy drummer who took his heaviest feelings out on his kit until Andy Hurley stepped in from the depths of the death metal scene. Despite appearances, they had a secret weapon all along: their vulnerability, which was perfectly realized in their official debut LP, Take This To Your Grave. While unrecognized in discography vinyl boxed sets, Evening Out With Your Girlfriend set the foundation for what was to come.

Early Days: From Evening Out With Your Girlfriend to Take This To Your Grave

Of course, there was a record before the recognized full-length debut took over MySpace profiles and AIM away messages. Though Evening Out With Your Girlfriend is often hailed as an 'ugly duckling' that aged better over time, it's important to see this record as a creative act of self-discovery rather than a fully formed statement. The band was just starting, and their lineup wasn't fully established yet. Mike Pareskuwicz was the drummer before Andy Hurley stepped in. They had to work with limited resources and without a major label to back any of Pete Wentz's larger-than-life ideas. Wentz may not have realized he had such grand ideas if not for this messy beginning.

So, they recorded the initial version of "Calm Before The Storm." Stump's vocal stylings were still in an awkward "beginner" phase, mimicking Mark Hoppus as best as he could. Even then, audiences could hear bits and piecesof potential poking out. The difference between Fall Out Boy and other bands had always been their gusto. They could use nuggets of inspiration and turn them into something much bigger than what they had previously. Working with minimal resources, the band had to intuitively engineer their sound from the ground up. This was how innovation began, especially within a budding genre that only had a few reference points available.

Things were a lot more rigid in the early days of pop-punk and emo. There was a stricter divide, mimicking the feud between punk and metal for generations prior. Call them "elitists" or "gatekeepers," but whatever they were, they were firm in their stance. These purists suggested that blurring the lines wouldn't foster creative growth but stifle an institution, even if only one they built in their heads. As a fully-fledged Take This To Your Grave took its final shape, a hodgepodge of emo, hardcore, pop-punk, and post-hardcore emerged with it. Still, this was not a groundbreaking success marked by instant gratification. Instead, Fall Out Boy did things the old-fashioned way.

A Few Stars Are Born: The Band Finds Their Homes Within It

Pete had just taken over as the band's lyricist, adding extra layers of texture to the band's assets. Patrick has always been a fantastic songwriter in his own right, as explored thoroughly in Truant Wave and Soul Punk, respectively. However, what took Fall Out Boy to the next level in their initial stages was when Pete took the pen. He curated a unique brand of lyric stylings; his ideas, while often chaotic and hard to sustain long-term, reflected a confessional structure that hadn't been explored until he did it. Trailblazing was an accidental subplot for Wentz, but it worked for him because his confessions were earnest.

Of course, there's been some debunked controversy here and there about certain lyrical themes in Take This To Your Grave. Many people write off less-tasteful analogies as a sign of the times. They'd be right to do so, on one hand. On another, Wentz's style has always been largely allegoric or metaphorical. It would be a crying shame to take anything he says at face value. In fact, legend says he told Stump to make some early work "as violent as possible" (paraphrased), and Stump took him too literally–a big mistake.

Regardless of the band's intentions or the impact of their lyrics, they hit home for many. The group was also 20-something years younger when they wrote the record. So, while deeply profound at times, it also showcased deep immaturity at times. Ideas like "pissing on your doorstep" are just venting frustrations from the perspective of a young man. Other songs, like "The Pros And Cons of Breathing," are a bit more nuanced, focusing hatred on the self. "I wish that I could hate you half as much as I hate myself." These constructs would become pivotal to the band's style over time, focusing less on the aggressor in Wentz's world and transforming into something more self-reflective.

However, these early-day efforts are quintessentially Fall Out Boy. Warts and all, Fall Out Boy's lyrical choices stand tall as primary documents, evidence of a generation who communicated on an instant messenger app that lived on a shared family computer or a Razr cellphone. The lack of social media outlets gave Wentz a lot of time to ruminate,creating a much more intense version of the thoughtful guy who is revered as one of the best lyricists of our time today by greats like Taylor Swift. There's a bit more balance here too, as some of these lyrics are penned by Stump, who was going through lord knows what at the time.

There were plenty of angsty teens across the board who resonated with Wentz and Stump on spiritual levels. Imagine organizing your MySpace Top 8 friends list while some guy whines in your ear, "he's well hung, and I am hanging up." Funny as it is now retrospectively, plenty of guys could relate. The raw confessional stylings of the first record are what lingered, giving young audiences an outlet to express their frustrations. Feelings aren't always pretty; at least, music served as a healthy coping mechanism amongst the chaos. Sometimes, critics suggest that the lyrical themes of the record are a bit repetitive. However, there are layers to each song. This compilation is often rumored to be about one specific person or incident, but it's far more likely from a songwriter's perspective that there were multiple inspirations for each track. Therefore, these themes can transmute in translation, earning new life as hoards of angsty teens apply them to their situation. Imagine also that Bush was president. There was a lot going on when Fall Out Boy wrote Take This To Your Grave. Thank goodness they did it back then because one can only imagine what music is going to come out of the current presidential term. Take This To Your Grave is Fall Out Boy's least politically-charged record, but one can assume confidently that much of their anger was rooted in a tumultuous Bush term.

The Sonic Evolution: Composition & Musicianship

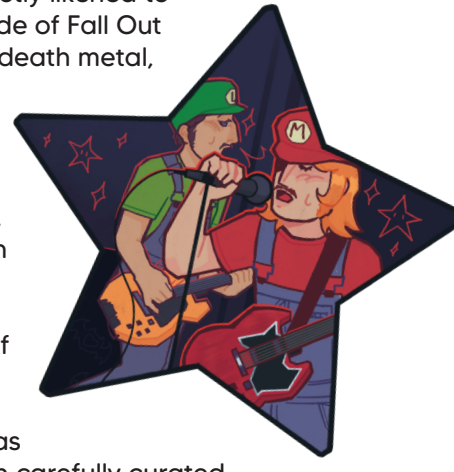
Sonically, things get fascinating within Take This To Your Grave. It's difficult to decipher what was a happy accident and what was intentional for Fall Out Boy as they curated sounds to match early lyrics. Of course, it could only be a rock record, as each member had deep ties to their local underground scene. Andy Hurley and Joe Trohman still actively participate in bands that are much heavier than Fall Out Boy to this day, happily so. This record clung to a live-feeling recording style, despite the band having a significantly larger amount of money to play with. It's obvious they recorded it in a studio; however, the energy carried over is raw and emotional, matching the rest of it effortlessly.

Technically speaking, Joe Trohman and Andy Hurley have always been profoundly skilled musicians. Each carries a significant portion of the group's weight, often hailed as unsung heroes due to media perception and focus on the other half of the band. Their hardcore influences ring true to this very day but are especially potent in Take This To Your Grave since they were still in the thick of it upon recording the record.

Trohman's guitar playing reflected underground DIY hardcore, but more specifically, unexpected metal bands like Motley Crue. His melodic riffs suggest he spent time studying big hair metal, and while ultimately rejecting its flashy veneer, borrowing from sonic choices. "Dead On Arrival" is among his most memorable riffs, mostly because the melodies are instantly recognizable. His signature style is difficult to replicate; it may seem "easy" at first, but once intricacies are pinpointed, it is tricky to put into action (pun intended). His clever ear for guitar layering established a call-and-response technique on top of his already melodic lead riffs.

This allowed Stump to compose similar lead vocals, with audience participation enhancing perhaps accidentally as a result.

Hurley's drumming is marked by unmatched technical precision. It's noticeable that every drummer on earth is ripped, but it is believed that the amount of muscle mass they possess is directly likened to the frequency at which they practice. Outside of Fall Out Boy, Hurley is known for his participation in death metal, with double-bass kick drums requiring a lot of gusto on his end. He brought techniques over to pop-punk and emo by implementing cymbals and tom patterns throughout a lot of Take This To Your Grave. Previously, drumming in pop-punk had been a little messier, whereas, in emo, it was a bit more understated. Hurley found the perfect balance, quite literally moving to the beat of his drum.



Though hailed as a lyricist, Wentz shouldn't be criticized for his bass playing, as he laid the foundation for the genre through carefully curated tricks and techniques. Namely, the use of bass at the forefront of a mix in a lead single was not that common. Bands like Midtown would do that since their lead vocalist was also their bass player, but it certainly was not commonplace. Moreover, Wentz was able to articulate his instrumentation through undeniably catchy riffs. Before "Dance, Dance," riffs within Take This To Your Grave showcased his technical promise and prowess.

Stump has always been a clever composer. His creative musical ear is nothing short of impressive, giving him the markings of a true legend. This record showcased potential rather than power. At the time, he was mimicking other artists that he admired, without realizing others would eventually do the same with him. "Chicago Is So Two Years Ago" is the best indicator of Stump as the vocalist we recognize and admire today. In this song, he worked with vocal and guitar layers to emphasize the emotional highs and lows that are described by feelings of homesickness paired with optimism. Stump has also been a master at blending his voice with others. Many have only recently come to realize it's Justin Pierre in the bridge layered atop Stump because they performed the song together during Fall Out Boy's 2024 run. Speaking of, the band has always prioritized live performances, as singalong moments that were introduced in Take This To Your Grave became a part of the group's signature style for the duration of their discography to date.

Let's Mosh: Touring's Impact On The Record & Band

Fall Out Boy's foundation was built on blood, sweat, and tears. They could not rely on viral moments landing them an appearance on The Ellen DeGeneres Show to secure their success. Instead, they had to take a grassroots approach and connect with people on the road.

Thankfully, they had label resources to help them get by. Still, they had a bare-bones effort without nepotism or other privileges to fuel their passions...only ramen led the way.

The band's relentless touring schedule is what sealed the deal for their debut breakout record. Take This To Your Grave was still considered niche property; top-40 radio was reserved for pop stars of the day or the occasional rap banger. Alternative artists had to claw their way to the top to be seen by the scene until more outlets appeared from the shadows of the underground. This tour forced them to up the ante, performing these already-energized songs with all they could muster to crowds of whoever would show up, and sometimes, that wasn't too many people. However, the people who did show faces wound up being integral parts of their story, eventually becoming friendly with the band and helping them push their legacy further.

There's something spiritual about a Fall Out Boy concert. Early days shows had an extra oomph to them, thanks to the close confines of the venues. One could only imagine the catharsis experienced by screaming lines like, "I wish that I was as invisible as you make me feel" or, "There's a light on in Chicago and I know I should be home" in a sweaty Chicago basement. Concerts are deeply humanizing experiences for everyone involved; this is the most direct way that artists can see their impact on fans and vice versa.

The grueling touring schedule for the first record instilled personal growth in each member of the band. The experience brought them closer together as friends and brothers, developing from "bandmates" to "true friends." Earned confidence was showcased in all four of them, but most prominently for the sheepish frontman. His wavering vibrato became more intentional with each show they played. He began to understand his position within the scene, thereby delivering more cohesive and consistent performances at each stop.

Eventually, fans on the road clung to Take This To Your Grave. The song was nearly biblical; people recited Wentz's lyrics as though they were spiritual verses. It represents the angst and emotion felt by an entire generation defined by technological booms and rapid societal changes. These frustrations couldn't have been represented by a better record.

The Ripple Effect: Fall Out Boy's Impact On Influential Peers

Fall Out Boy famously established an entire network of musicians. Of course, one could argue that Pete's startup label Decaydance Records is the cause of this phenomenon, but truthfully, their influence predates even the first Decaydance roster. A firmer argument would assert that the exposure from the first tour caught the ears and hearts of the exact right people.

Panic! At The Disco is perhaps the most famous of Wentz's early years signees. Ryan Ross famously admired Fall Out Boy so much that the band bothered them on MySpace until Wentz listened to their demo. Consequently, Wentz realized that, unfortunately for him, the band was phenomenal. It wasn't difficult to A&R A Fever You Can't Sweat Out demos, largely because they borrowed from Fall Out Boy's tips and tricks.

Emotional intensity and flamboyant presentation were directly inspired by Take This To Your Grave. Ross took Wentz's heart-on-sleeve lyrical approach, while Urie came built-in with a voice so like Stump's, they were able to blend seamlessly in 2008's "20 Dollar Nose Bleed." Moreover, Ross's lyrics completely mirrored Wentz's confessional stylings to the point where many parents still struggle with differentiating the groups to this day.

Hometown heroes The Academy Is... also caught on to Fall Out Boy's strengths before becoming close comrades and associates via Decaydance. William Beckett, known for prancing around the stage in the tightest pants imaginable, leverages melodic sensibility and emotional vulnerability in each performance. Eventually, The Academy Is... would become known for layered melodies and undoubtedly catchy hooks that get stuck in your head for decades. "About A Girl" couldn't have existed without "Dead On Arrival" or "Calm Before The Storm." Beckett's knack for capturing catharsis could have come naturally, but it was certainly developed further after taking lessons from his friends in Fall Out Boy.

Conversely, already-established forces within the scene started to change shape after Fall Out Boy's breakout record proved to do extraordinarily well. For example, Taking Back Sunday was certainly known in their own right, but Louder Now was too conveniently timed not to be influenced by Take This To Your Grave, at least subconsciously. Without Take This To Your Grave, Taking Back Sunday's later work likely would have sounded completely different. However, now, both bands feature sing-along moments atop gut-punching lyrics that seemingly fit every situation. Arguably, these are examples of bands who borrowed from each other, rather than simply taking inspiration from one sole source. Instead, Taking Back Sunday stuck to their convictions while appreciating what Fall Out Boy was doing, further developing their sound accordingly.

It wasn't just American bands borrowing from Fall Out Boy, either. These earlier examples are hailed as legends today, but there's also an entire post-generation of bands that directly or indirectly reference Take This To Your Grave. Notably, Patty Walter's band Set It Off was famously inspired by Fall Out Boy, right down to their name, which is a "Calm Before The Storm" reference. Sonically, the band had so much American influence that fans wouldn't have known they were British unless they had followed Walters' YouTube career. Either way, being a catalyst to the point where bands name themselves after a record is a phenomenally impressive feat for a band, especially one that had to use grassroots efforts to establish their name. Remember, they may have had certain elements of privilege, but no one in Fall Out Boy significantly benefitted from nepotism.

Legacy And Lasting Impact: Take This To Your Grave's Sonic Boom

Fall Out Boy's debut record became the definitive of a generation of artists and fans over just two decades. That's a relatively short period for a record to get so widely recognized, especially one with firm roots in underground spaces. Its unique blend of catchy hooks and emotional vulnerability resonated deeply with people from all walks of life. It captured the ideas of youth, heartbreak, and identity in a novel way at the time.

Eventually, it became a hallmark of the 2000s, especially within the emo and pop-punk scenes. To this day, many hail Take This To Your Grave as the band's most quintessential work, thanks to experimentation and lyrical prowess.

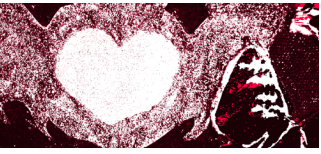
Take This To Your Grave was a masterclass of heart-on-your-sleeve poetry, building melodic compositions, and raw emotional music. The following era of pop-punk was significantly more experimental than the one before it. People were excited about getting gritty with music again because Fall Out Boy did it so well with their first record. It was both emotionally resonant and commercially viable, allowing the band to break through the previous confines of their built-in audience from their DIY roots. Plus, the success of this record allowed for the expansion of Fueled By Ramen, ushering in even more emo and pop-punk greats.

The record shaped expectations of what pop-punk and emo could be. It was no longer one way or another; the two things were allowed to coexist like the center of a Venn Diagram. Thanks to Fall Out Boy, the genre was now emotionally vulnerable and sonically engaging. You could mosh while you cried, belting out the catchiest choruses known to man. Fall Out Boy stood out from their first effort because their lyrics felt like deep confessions, as though they were having nighttime car talks with their best friend. Or, perhaps these things would have been better shared with a therapist- either way, these were anthems made for a generation of people who were vying tirelessly to be heard over a sea of political turmoil and economic unrest. Finally, there was someone who understood them and a place to escape when it all became too much.

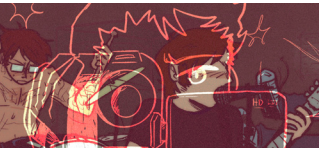
Take This To Your Grave established a cultural moment. Its themes of disillusionment and self-discovery connect deeply as listeners navigate through rejection, growing pains, and early heartbreak. Eventually, these profoundly curated anthems were enough to inspire others to start bands, too, further fostering creative growth along the way. The world felt extraordinarily complex for the youth of 2003, and Fall Out Boy provided the healthiest coping mechanism imaginable. Music often acts as medicine or escapism during tumultuous times.

Fall Out Boy is now known as a legacy act, but Take This To Your Grave stands tall. If anything, it has grown in its scope; plenty of fans grew up with it, but new generations can still use it as a touchstone for discovery. As for myself, this was my "gateway drug." Beyond the notes of my parents' heavy metal collections existed Take This To Your Grave, something that could exist as mine. Therefore, the influence of Take This To Your Grave cannot be limited to its immediate impact upon its release in May 2003. Instead, it acts like an invisible string, a lasting thread that has woven through several sublets of modern music, challenging the norm to the point where it eventually
becomes the norm.

Credits

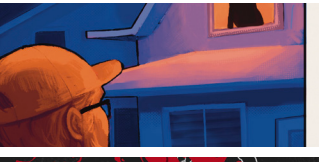


Clandestine
Nino
@kaverial



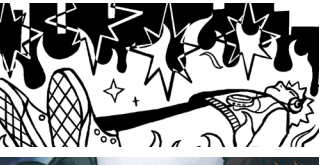
Synergy
Mars
@angelsarrm

Patron saint of liars and fakes
Tessa
@tessasalsa3



Chicago is so two years ago
Villain
@m.ercurial

My heart is the worst kind of weapon
Antonymph
@_antonymph_



Theres a light on
Rania
@vampaliens

Polaroid
Mars
@angelsarrm

Stickers
Formi
@formigoid

Postcard
Evan
@St4rDre4m

About the Catcade

The Catcade is a non-profit, arcade-themed cat rescue, lounge, and a version of a cat café. Their lounge simulates a home environment. Cats are not kept in cages, instead they get to live in our 950 sq. ft. lounge where guests can pay $20 to visit the lounge and spend time playing, cuddling, and socializing rescue cats. All of their cats are adoptable, with the exception of their resident cat Leo.

The Catcade was started in 2017 by fellow cat lovers, Chris Gutierrez and Shelly Casey. They had one mission in mind when creating their concept and that was their love of felines and the need to "save more cats". They have traveled all over the world and in every location they visit their mission is to find the cat-related "thing to do". After talking over the idea of starting a cat café for years, one night while watching bad reality tv the pair came up with The Catcade concept. In January of 2017 they officially created their non-profit and fundraising and looking for a location. On August 19, 2017 they opened the doors to The Catcade at 1235 W Belmont Ave in Chicago. They poured everything they had into their passion of saving cats and are proud of the work they do every day at The Catcade.

About the mod team

Head & production mod **Cat | @sharkbaitprints**
Writing mod **kyaurum | kyaurum.carrd.co**
Art mod **Leo | @twoheadedleo**
Organization mod **Techa | @tenshi_agerasia**
Graphics & formatting mod **Sora | @notaozora**